



PRESS STATEMENT

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ESSA statement regarding the News of the World allegations concerning match-fixing in Snooker

Brussels, 3 May 2010 – The European Sports Security Association (ESSA) is very concerned about the allegations made by the News of the World on Sunday 2 May, which highlight the integrity issues being faced by many sports as a result of potentially criminal behaviour by their own participants.

The paper's story that John Higgins agreed to accept money in return for losing four frames, while unproven, underlines the worrying fact that issues which tend to undermine the integrity in sport often begin with the participants themselves bringing their own game into disrepute.

Anything that undermines confidence and integrity is not only worrying for the sports themselves, but is potentially serious for the gaming industry too. It is the gaming industry itself that suffers financial and reputational losses when the integrity of sport is called into question. We are all losers if punters believe the game is not clean. They will simply stop betting if they cannot rely on the integrity.

To address this, ESSA, on behalf of the licensed, regulated betting industry, has taken great steps towards eliminating the risk of match-fixing from its side. ESSA has monitoring agreements with a number of major sports federations, including the WPBSA, and acts as an early-warning system in detecting and combating irregularities in betting patterns around sports fixtures

It continues to invest in sophisticated 'track and trace' technology to monitor betting patterns, to initiate education programmes for sports people on the dangers posed by unethical behaviour, and in establishing closer relations with the police, regulators and sports bodies.

ESSA offers its full support to the sport of snooker, along with all sports, to eliminate unethical behaviour and to promote complete integrity.

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About ESSA

The European Sports Security Association (ESSA) was established in 2005 by the leading online sports book operators in Europe to monitor any irregular betting patterns or possible insider betting from within each sport. To achieve this goal ESSA implemented an early warning system between its members that highlights any suspicious betting activity.

The Early Warning System allows ESSA to work with the sports regulators and their disciplinary and legal department, ensuring that when an alert is given the regulator is informed immediately which may prevent the possibility of any game manipulation on a given event. So far, ESSA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with [FIFA](#), [UEFA](#), [EPFL](#), [The FA](#), [DFB](#), [ATP](#), [ITF](#), [WTA](#) and has established close relations with the [IOC](#) and many other sports regulators.

For more information on ESSA please go to the ESSA website <http://www.eu-ssa.org>.